

Frederick County Ethics Commission
Minutes for the Public Meeting of Wednesday, August 14, 2019

Present: Stephen K. Hess, Chair
Ernest A. Heller, Vice-Chair
Dr. Anna Johnson-Winegar, Commission Member
Rev. Douglas P. Jones, Commission Member
James Stanker, Alternate Commission Member
Linda B. Thall, Senior Assistant County Attorney

Absent: M. Shane Canfield, Commission Member
Deidre R. Davidson, Commission Member
Deborah L. Lundahl, Commission Member

The Frederick County Ethics Commission meeting started at 7:00 p.m. on August 14, 2019, in the Winchester Room on the 2nd floor of Winchester Hall, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, Maryland 21701.

Approval of the minutes – The draft minutes from the July 10, 2019 meeting were emailed to the members before the meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Heller made a motion to approve the minutes. Rev. Jones seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Distribution of an additional financial disclosure statement – It was learned that the member of a County Board had submitted his financial disclosure statement using an incorrect form. The member subsequently completed the correct disclosure form. This new form was provided to the Ethics Commission members for their review. The Commission members will discuss their comments and questions regarding the financial disclosure statements at the Commission's October meeting.

Discussion of Ethics brochure distribution – At the Commission's July meeting, the Commission asked that the Commission's Ethics Law brochure be made more available to the public. Ms. Thall stated that the brochures were now available in the 1st floor lobby area and the County Attorney's Office in Winchester Hall, as well as at the buildings where the Citizens Services Division, Senior Services Division and Parks and Recreation Divisions are located. In addition, copies were sent to the different Frederick County library locations. The brochures were also sent to Frederick Community College, Hood College and Mount St. Mary's University, with a request that they be placed in areas where they would be available to students and the public. The Commission asked that it be advised if these institutions responded to the Commission's request. The Chamber of Commerce was contacted, but did not respond. The League of Women Voters was unable to accommodate the request, as it does not have an office location.

Discussion of the Commission's annual report – Before the meeting, the members received drafts of the Commission's annual report, which is due to the County Executive and County Council Members by October 1. The members approved the draft, with updates to be made as necessary before the report is distributed.

Decision on a September meeting – Ms. Thall advised the Commission that she will not be able to attend the September meeting. Rev. Jones stated that at this time there did not appear to be a need for the Commission to meet in September, but that a meeting could be scheduled in September if the need arose. The other members agreed with Rev. Jones.

Decision to meet to perform an administrative function – The Commission recently received an ethics complaint against a County official. The Commission discussed whether it should conduct an administrative function meeting to discuss the complaint.

MOTION: Dr. Johnson-Winegar made a motion to hold an administrative function meeting. Mr. Stanker seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Required information regarding the administrative function meeting – The Commission began its administrative function meeting at approximately 7:10 p.m. on August 14, 2019, in the Winchester Room on the 2nd floor of Winchester Hall, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, Maryland 21701. Present for the meeting were Mr. Hess, Mr. Heller, Dr. Johnson-Winegar, Rev. Jones, Mr. Stanker and Ms. Thall. The Commission discussed whether the facts alleged in the complaint, if true, would constitute a violation of the Ethics Law by the County official named in the complaint. By consensus, the members agreed that the facts alleged in the complaint did not state a violation of the Ethics Law. The members asked Ms. Thall to draft the necessary dismissal notice.

MOTION: Rev. Jones made a motion to end the administrative function meeting. Mr. Heller seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

The administrative function meeting ended at 7:25 pm.

Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Heller made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Johnson-Winegar seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

The Ethics Commission adjourned its meeting at approximately 7:25 p.m.

/s/
Linda B. Thall, Senior Assistant County Attorney